

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS FOR ALLOWANCE

Reconsideration of the subject application is requested. It is believed that the application, as now amended should be passed for allowance because of the following reasons.

The amended claims are neither anticipated under 35 USC 102(b) nor obvious under 35 USC 103(a) over the references. Gileta US 5,240,169 is directed to a wave soldering apparatus and method wherein the formation of solder oxide (dross) is prevented by isolating a solder wave with an inert gas. The inert gas is confined between a free surface of the solder wave and the atmosphere

The claimed inventions are directed to an apparatus and method for removing dross in a solder pot by chemically reacting an de-oxidizing agent with a solder to separate the dross from the solder and removing a non-solder residue with a vacuum pump which collects under a shroud.

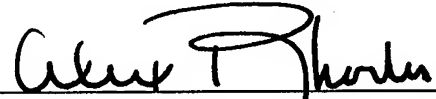
Kawashima US 6,235,08 discloses a method and apparatus for removing solder oxide (dross) from solder in a solder pot which differs substantially from Applicants' apparatus and method. Kawashima teaches the removal of dross by applying dusting agents, such as, offal, cereal grain, flower, etc. to a dross which is scooped up from the surface of liquid solder into a vessel. The vessel is moved up and down several times to separate dross from good solder adhered thereto.

With the claimed inventions, a de-oxidizing agent is added to a designated area such as under a shroud or a dross reservoir. The dross and an de-oxidizing agent are intensively mixed with an impeller to separate dross from good solder and a non-solder

residue is removed with a vacuum source, such as a pump. Such mixing is believed by persons skilled in the art to be counterproductive and thought to promote the generation of dross.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner view favorably on this amendment and pass this application for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Rhodes", written over a horizontal line.

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Dated: November 19, 2004